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PHILLIP SGROI

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MR. SGROI: Thank you. My name is Phillip Sgroi. The previous speaker is my wife and I wanted to tease her that with her intelligence and concern, that when it came time to marry her, I knew that nothing could go wrong. What I wanted to share with you today is that when one looks at this question, that one tends to look at it in scientific and technical terms. What I wanted to do was to look at it in human terms. What I wanted to do was to ask several questions.

1 We know that there are scientific issues that are very, very important and there are people in this room with more scientific expertise than I. However, what I wanted to ask was some of the questions that might not be dealt with. One of the things that concerns me is that besides things like accidents and transportation, terrorism and other such issues, is that we, the American people, have not been involved in this process from the beginning. From the very beginning we were not involved in the process and it's very simple to realize that in a democracy, the issues are to be decided by the people and not by experts, however sincere their convictions.

I want to tell two stories about this. One was I met once and heard George Walt speak, who won the Nobel Prize in chemistry. He was asked by the Department of Defense to invent a weapon that would allow people to lose their vision and become blind. And he said would you then kill the soldiers that were blind, and they answered yes, and he said I want no part of this. And he suggested that there's a litmus test that is as simple as it is short, which is that before each major decision that our body of politics makes, that we should ask this question: Is it good for children?

2 Is war good for children? Is racism good for children? Is poverty good for children? Is the transportation of nuclear waste through our country good for children? I don't believe that it is. The other thing that I wanted to remind this panel of was something that I heard earlier that frightened me, and what it was was the suggestion that under one scenario 3,300 people would be called the worst-case scenario and the death of 1,100 people would be called the best-case scenario. I don't consider the death of 1,100 human beings a best-case scenario.

I believe that human life is sacred, as do you, and I don't see that the dying of people to transport nuclear waste is something that we can say is acceptable. The news talks about acceptable levels of employment. I wanted to know who it was acceptable to; certainly not the person that was unemployed. The last thing I wanted to close with was a joint statement by two very bright scientific minds of our time. One of them was Albert Einstein, the other one was Bertram Russell and they signed something and ended it with the words, "Just remember your humanity and forget the rest." And I think it's time to abandon the God of science and technology and to remember our humanity and to forget the rest. Thank you.